

EASEMENT 94-462  
T-51  
21United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered 9 April 1985

## 1. Name

historic Wye Mill

and/or common Old Wye Mill; Wye Grist Mill

## 2. Location

street &amp; number Maryland Route 662 n/a not for publication

city, town Wye Mills n/a vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland code 24 county Queen Anne's code 035

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities

street &amp; number 2335 Marriottsville Road

city, town Marriottsville n/a vicinity of state Maryland 21104

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Queen Anne's County Courthouse

street &amp; number

city, town Centreville state Maryland 21617

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Maryland Historical Trust  
Historic Sites Inventoryhas this property been determined eligible? ☒ yes ☐ nodate 1977 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

## 7. Description

QA-462

**Condition**

☐ excellent  
☐ good  
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

**Check one**

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

**Check one**

☒ original site  
☐ moved date n/a

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance****Number of Resources****Contributing**

1  
0  
0  
0  
1

**Noncontributing**

0 buildings  
0 sites  
0 structures  
0 objects  
0 Total

**Number of previously listed**

National Register properties  
included in this nomination: 0

Original and historic functions  
and uses: industrial

**DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:**

Wye Mill, one of the earliest industrial sites on the Eastern Shore in continuous use, dates from the mid-eighteenth century. It is a small frame waterpowered, grist mill located on the west side of Delmarva Road (Rt. 662) in Wye Mills, Maryland. It is powered by an early 20th century 20 foot diameter iron overshot wheel, manufactured by the Fitz Water Wheel Company of Hanover, Pennsylvania. The wheel is located on the south side of the building and the mill is built on a bank so that the foundation on its west side is a full story. It is four bays long and two bays deep. Entrances are located on the east, north and west elevations and the windows all have 6/6 sash. The gable roof, siding, and foundation walls were renewed in 1953. The walls are covered with redwood siding replacing the 18th century cypress beveled siding, and the wooden steps and stoop are reconstructions. A mill race runs from an earlier dam, installed in 1950s by the Game and Inland Fish Commission, through a conduit wheel. The mill retains nearly all of its late nineteenth and early twentieth century equipment including French burr stone, American midget roller mill, sifters, bolters, grain hoppers and flour cleaning machines. Wye Mill is virtually unchanged in its attempt to keep up with milling technology for the last 200 years with those parts of the machinery or building which were worn out repaired or replaced as efficient operation demanded.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Wye Mill

Continuation sheet

Queen Anne's Co. , MD Item number

7

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Wye Grist Mill is one of three mills that named the town of Wye Mills. It is one of the earliest Maryland industrial sites in continuous use. The present building dates from the mid eighteenth century but a grist mill has existed on the site since the 1670s.

Wye Mill is a small frame building - four bays long and two bays wide. Its gable roof, siding, and the foundation were renewed in 1953. The windows are 6/6 sash and have a single batten shutter. An early dutch batten door is perhaps the most striking 18th century feature on the exterior. Entrances on the west, north and east elevations provide access to milling operations. On the south gable is a 20th century Fitz steel 1XL overshot water wheel and header tank. The water wheel is 10 feet in diameter, 8 feet wide and has three rows of arms. Originally manufactured by the Fitz Water Wheel Company of Hanover, Pennsylvania, it has, unfortunately, been badly reconstructed and damaged by inexperienced hands. The tailrace, now seriously "backwatered," meanders through a cleared area, then through dense woods to the west branch or head of the Wye River. The mill is built on a bank so that the foundation on the west side is a full story. The mill race (or sluiceway) with Armco sluice gate controls runs from the earthen dam holding 51 acres of water. It drops 12 and 1/2 feet downhill through a concrete conduit or flume under the road (Rt. 662) and thence to the water wheel.

The basement ceiling framing, as well as the first floor framing, divides the rectangular building into four equal bays. Running east and west are major girders with minor joists extending between them. Framing and supports in the south bay are heavier than the others as the heavy 48" French burr stones (2 tons) are located in this area, as well as an American Midget Marvel roller mill machinery. Several empty mortises in the framing may indicate that parts are "recycled" and used from elsewhere in the mill or from agricultural buildings in the area.

The wheelshaft is fitted with a cast iron driving spur about 8 feet in diameter. The wallower, a small pinion spur gear, is 21 inches. Secondary chain drive to a second countershaft drives the roller plant and other auxiliaries. There are two basic drives from the water wheel, one being to the millstones and the other to elevators and the American Midge roller plant.

On the first floor a girder supported upon four chamfered posts runs north and south. Obviously a later addition, it was probably added to support more weight in grain and machinery.

Many repairs are evident in the structure: Along with the Oak Hurst Frame (which needs to be separated from the structural framing of the building) there is evidence of two sets of millstones having been mounted. At present one pair of stones have been replaced with a Cranson flour cleaning machine.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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date entered

Continuation sheet Wye Mill  
Queen Anne's County, MD

Item number

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (continued)

Wye Mill has received the usual alteration to its machinery necessary to keep "up to date" with modern milling practice. Many repairs are evident in the structure but much of the 19th and 20th century machinery follows change in technology and forms a museum of milling technology history. Still remaining are the French burr stones, American Midget Marvel roller mill, Cranson flour cleaning machine, bolting machines, grain chutes, hoppers, scales, gyrator, flour chests, elevators separator, feed mixer, dust collector, fanning mills, corn shellers, and so forth.

In the northeast corner is a small office with brick chimney which served an interior cast iron stove. Adjacent to the office door is a ladder to the loft. The roof structure is original, being composed of minor rafters half lapped and pinned at the apex - having dove tail collar beams. The rafters rest on the tilted false plate. Many up and down braces have been completely removed.

## 8. Significance

QA-46Z

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates mid-18th century Builder/Architect unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: A  
Applicable Exceptions: none  
Level of Significance for Evaluation: local

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Wye Mill is significant for its association with the development of the grist milling industry on Maryland's agricultural Eastern Shore from the mid-18th century through the early years of the twentieth. A grist mill has existed on this site since the 1680's; the present building, constructed in the mid-18th century, retains structural features characteristic of that period including tilted-false-plate roof construction and a Dutch batten door, and houses a virtual museum of 19th- and early-20th-century grist milling machinery reflecting the evolution of the industry, and of the structure, during more than 200 years of nearly continuous use. Wye Mill is the oldest grist mill on the Eastern Shore, and probably the oldest in the state of Maryland.

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT

The Wye Mill is located in the small town of Wye Mills and is one of the few United States mills in continual use since the middle of the 18th century. It is a "showcase of the history of milling" having moved along with the advance of milling technology. It displays a virtual museum of mill machinery. Like many flour-grist mills which once stood throughout the colonies, it was once an important and economic trading center for the region. A mill was an important component within any colonial settlement. The farmer could raise his grain independently, but he could not use it until it was ground. He took it to a mill. Other men did the same. The mill became a meeting place. It served that social function before either the general store or the newspapers. Communities centered around the mills.

From the viewpoint of industry Wye Mill is significant as the oldest mill in continual use on the Eastern Shore and one of the oldest functioning mills still standing in Maryland. There are several functioning mills such as Kaese and Stanton's Mills in Garrett County, Rockland Mills in Baltimore County, and Union Mills (museum) in Carroll County but Wye Mill is one of the oldest mills in the state. The mill has been a landmark since 1706 when the general assembly created Queen Anne's County and the mill became a major point on the boundary line between Talbot and Queen Anne's Counties. In 1748 it was referred to as "Old Wye Mill" and in April of 1779 Colonel William Hemsley "of Old Wye Mill" received an order for ten thousand pounds sterling with which he was to send wheat ground at the Wye Mill to the continental troops at Valley Forge.

The following are known to have owned a mill on the site:

Edward Barrowclif	1680s
Richard Bennett	
Richard Sweatman	1690s-1722
Edward Lloyd	1722-1778
William Hemsley	1778-1821
Samuel Hopkins family	1821-1877
F. T. Brown	1877
John Brown	1887-1899
John S. Sewell	1899-1918
Winthrop Blakeslee	
Mary Scott Blakeslee	1918-1953

In 1953 the State of Maryland bought the property from Mr. Blakeslee and deeded one acre and the mill to the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities. The mill was restored from 1956 to 1960. Students from Chesapeake College, on a work-study plan, operated the mill through the 1970s.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

QA-462

Emory, Frederic. History of Queen Anne's County (1886)

Talbot County Land Records, #5 fol. 81; #26 fol. 616; #401 fol. 404; #413 fol. 329

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.76 acresQuadrangle name Wye Mills, MarylandQuadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	8	4	0	6	3	8	0	4	3	0	9	7	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundaries are depicted on the attached plat, and represent the current property boundaries; the nominated property, 0.76 acre, encompasses the resource within its historic setting.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	Queen Anne's	code	035
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state	code	county	Talbot	code	041
-------	------	--------	--------	------	-----

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ms. E. Barton Hall McGuire, millerorganization Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquitiesdate 31 July 1984street & number Box 277telephone (301) 827-6909city or town Wye Millsstate Maryland 21679

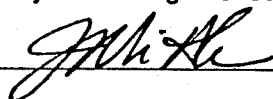
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICERdate FEBRUARY 22, 1985

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

*Easement*  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

QA-462 E  
T-51  
2100514103

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Wye Mill

AND OR COMMON

Wye Mill

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Md. Rt. 662, on border of Talbot and Queen Anne's Counties

CITY, TOWN

Wye Mills

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Talbot

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☐ SITE

☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC

☐ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED

☐ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES RESTRICTED

☐ YES UNRESTRICTED

☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ MILITARY

☒ MUSEUM

☐ PARK

☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☐ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

State of Md., Dept. of Natural Resources Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

Rowe Blvd.

CITY, TOWN

Annapolis

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21401

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC Talbot County Courthouse

Liber #: 401, 413, 414

Folio #: 404, 329, 693

STREET & NUMBER

N. Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Easton

STATE

Maryland 21601

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE



# DESCRIPTION

QA-462

## CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Wye Mill is a small frame building located in the village of the same name. It is four bays long and two bays deep and is covered with a symmetrical 'A' roof. The foundation was renewed in 1953 as was the siding and roof. Each of the windows has 6/6 sash and a single batten shutter. An early batten Dutch door exists in the second bay from the south on the east facade. Wooden steps and stoop are also reconstructions. On the south gable is a modern water wheel and sluse in place of the original. The structure is built on a bank so that the foundation on the west side is a full story. Behind the building is a cleared area with picnic tables.

The basement ceiling framing as well as the first floor framing divides the rectangular building into four equal bays. Running east-west are major girders with minor joists extending between them. Framing and supports in the south bay are heavier than the other as the heavy mill stones are located in this area, as well as other machinery. Several empty mortises in the framing may indicate that parts are re-used from elsewhere.

On the first floor a girder supported upon four champhered posts runs from north to south. It may be a later addition when more weight in either grain or machinery was added. Like the basement, there are several repairs evident in the structure. On display is a long section of beveled siding taken from the building when restored in 1953.

The interior possesses much of the machinery found in the building when acquired by the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities. Most of the works appears to be 19th and 20th century in date. In the northeast corner is a small office with brick chimney rising thru the roof. Adjacent the door to the office is a ladder to the loft. The roof structure is original, being composed of minor rafters half lapped and pinned at the apex and having half dovetail collar beams. The rafters rest on a diagonal false plate, like Bounds Lott, Wicomico County.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# SIGNIFICANCE

QA-46Z

## PERIOD

— PREHISTORIC  
— 1400-1499  
— 1500-1599  
— 1600-1699  
✓ 1700-1799  
— 1800-1899  
— 1900-

— ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  
— ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  
✓ — AGRICULTURE  
✓ — ARCHITECTURE  
— ART  
— COMMERCE  
— COMMUNICATIONS

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

— COMMUNITY PLANNING  
— CONSERVATION  
— ECONOMICS  
— EDUCATION  
— ENGINEERING  
— EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
✓ — INDUSTRY  
— INVENTION

— LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
— LAW  
— LITERATURE  
— MILITARY  
— MUSIC  
— PHILOSOPHY  
— POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

— RELIGION  
— SCIENCE  
— SCULPTURE  
— SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  
— THEATER  
— TRANSPORTATION  
— OTHER (SPECIFY)

## SPECIFIC DATES

## BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wye Mill is of great importance on two counts; architecture and industry. Architecturally it appears to be the earliest milling structure existing on the Eastern Shore. It is a simple structure as were most mill buildings of the period. Although the exact date of the structure is not known without doubt, it at least dates from the 18th century.

From the viewpoint of industry, it is representative of a major industry in rural Eastern Shore during the first two centuries of its growth. Wye Mill has also been in operation longer than any other on the Eastern Shore, even though it has had periods of non-operation. Presently it is operated as a mill by the Society for the Preservation of Maryland Antiquities and the Students of Chesapeake College.

"The mill has been a landmark for so long that when the Maryland General Assembly met on April 9, 1706 to create Queen Anne's County, the mill, then known as Sweatman's Mill, was made a point on the dividing line between Talbot and Queen Anne's Counties.

In April 1779, Colonel William Hemsley received an order on the Eastern Shore treasury for \$10,000 with which he was instructed to purchase supplies for the Continental Army, and have wheat ground at the Wye Mill. He also received a letter from Robert Morris (financier of the American Revolution and son of Robert Morris of Oxford) requesting him to supply more flour for use by Continental troops.

The following are known to have owned a mill on this site:

Edward Barrowcliff	1680's
Richard Bennett	1690 - 1722
Edward Lloyd, III and IV	1722 - 1778
William Hemsley	1778 - 1821
Samuel Hopkins	1821 - 1877
F.T. Brown	1877 - 1899
John S. Sewell	1899 - 1918
Winthrop Blakeslee	1918 - 1953

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Preston, Dickson J., Wye Oak, Tidewater Publishers, Cambridge, 1972.

Forman, H. Chandlee, Old Buildings, Gardens, and Furniture of Tidewater Maryland, Tidewater Publishers, Cambridge, 1967.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Michael Bourne, Architectural Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

Jan. 13, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Shaw House, 21 State Circle

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Maryland 21401

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

BEARINGS REFERRED TO  
MERIDIAN CORRECTED FOR  
OF 71 DEGREES 50 MINUTE

GAME & INLAND  
FISH COMMISSION

C.M.

TALBOT CO.  
QUEEN ANNE'S CO.

LINE	BEARING	DIST.
1	S05° 42' E	5.52'
2	S83° 40' W	20.20'
3	N05° 35' W	20.62'
4	N66° 50' W	244.20'
5	N50° 10' E	274.50'
6	S7° 00' E	287.20'

boundary

TAIL

RACE

boundary

WM. WOOLCOTT

PIPE

boundary

MD. Route 662

WYE MILLS

NAIL

GAME & INLAND FISH COMMISSION

FRANK MURRI

MILL RACE

Area = 0.76 acres

STATE OF  
GAME & INLAND  
PLAT OF MILL  
LAKE, WYE MILLS  
TO SOCIETY FOR PRE  
AN  
SURVEYED 2-9-51

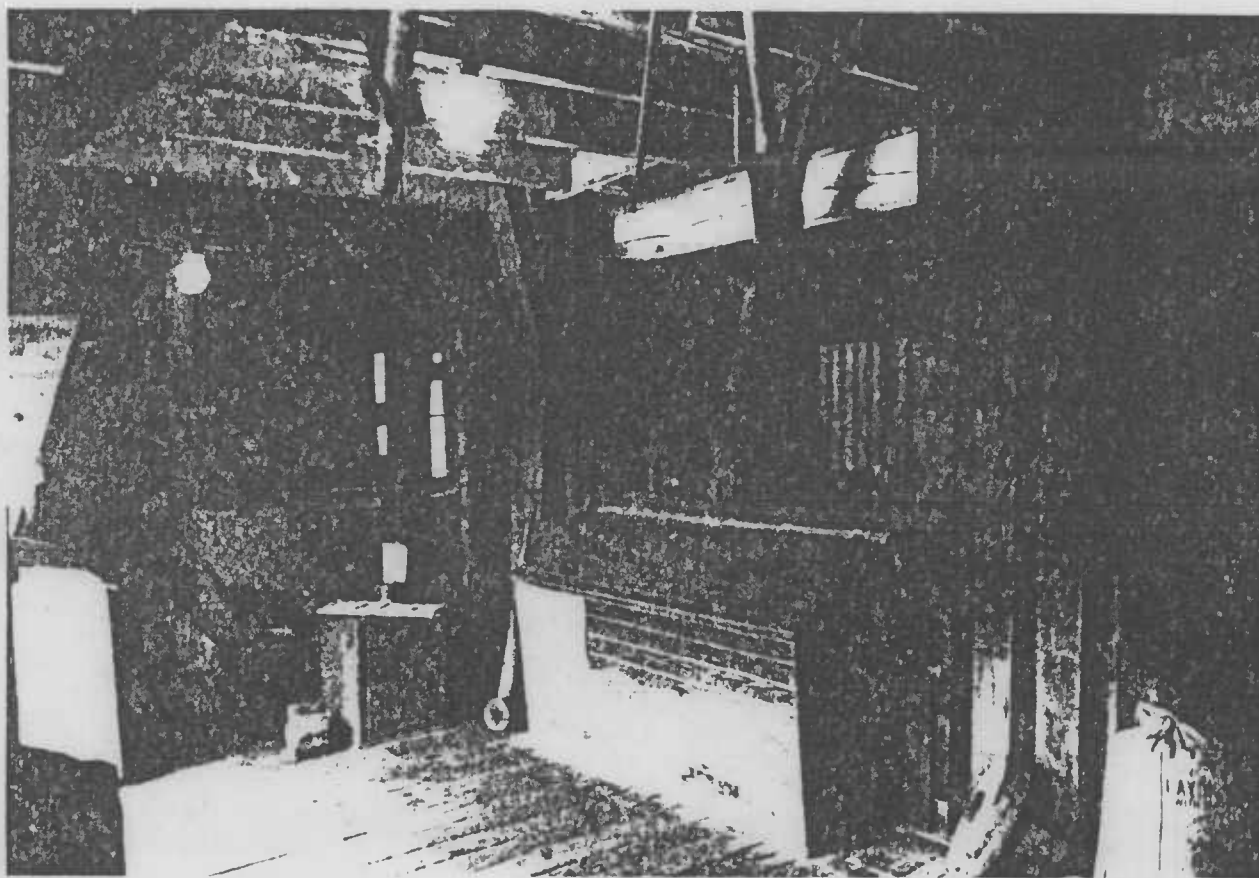
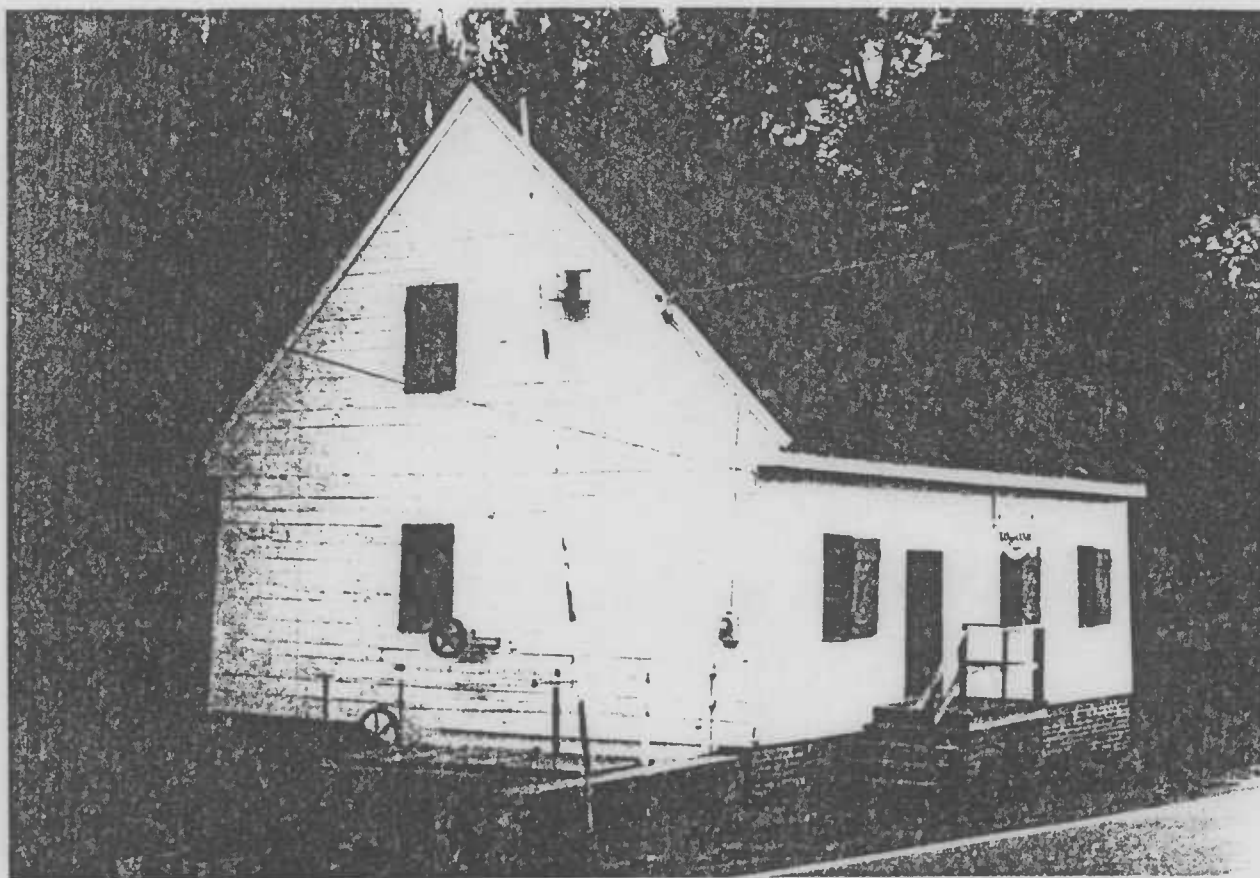
WYE MILL Q-4-462  
Queen Anne's County, Maryland  
boundary map 1984

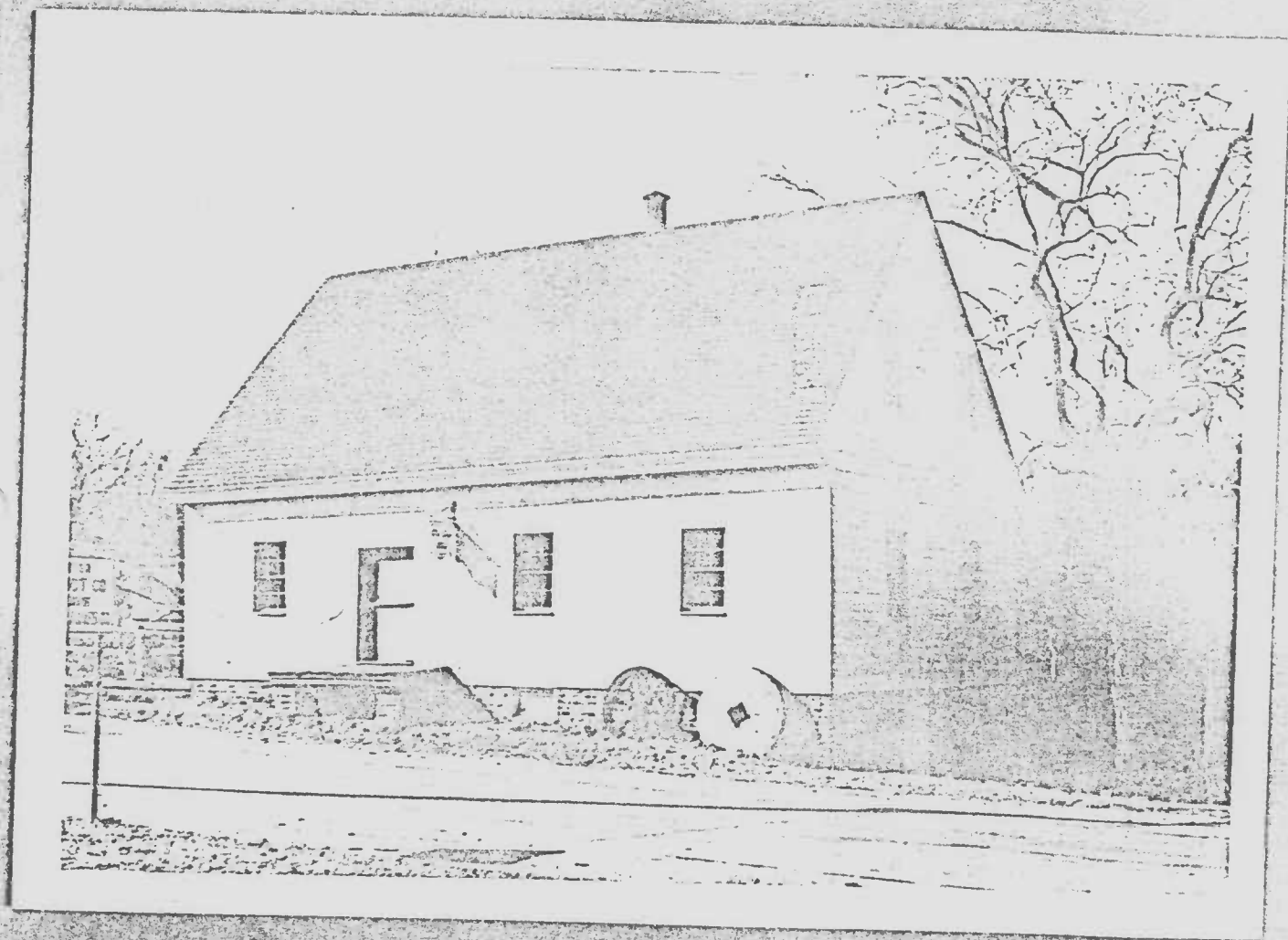
QA-462

Wye Mill  
Queen Anne's Co.  
Maryland

18/406380/4309760



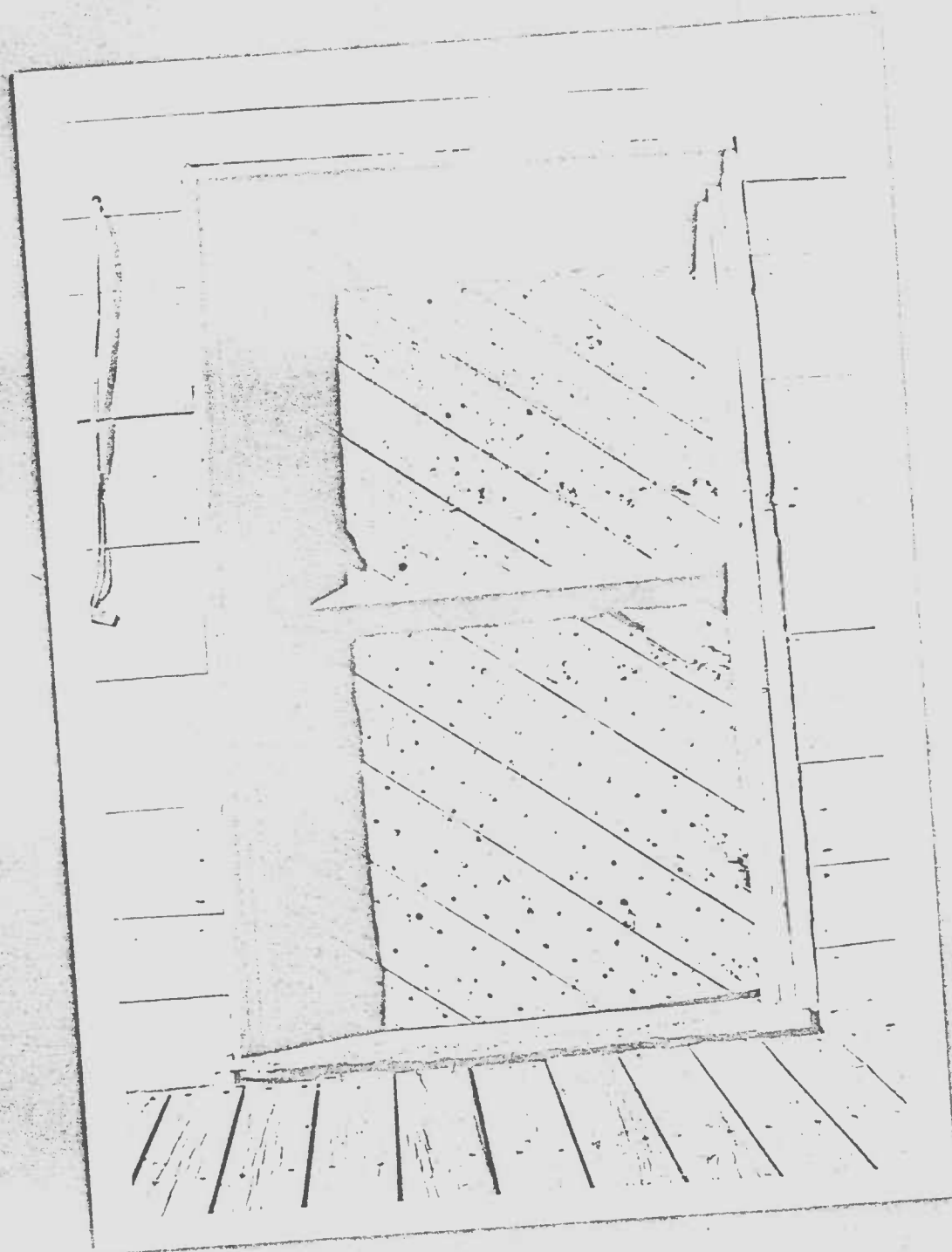




WYE MILL

T-51 & QA 462







QA-462 (T-5i)  
Wye Mill

Mary McCarthy  
Spring/Summer 2003  
Digital color photo on file at MHT

